

Rejoice in the Lord always?

(video transcript)

By Karen Spiegelberg

“Rejoice in the Lord always.”

What? Are you kidding me?

“I will say it again: Rejoice!”

I'm Karen Spiegelberg, welcome to A

WORD for Women, a show by women and for women where we build each other up in our amazing and wonderful God given roles in life.

Ah yes, Philippians 4 verse 4 is probably one of the most misunderstood passages of the Bible.

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!”

Who wrote that anyway? It must have been someone with a very charmed life; someone who had great material wealth, a lot going for them, and nothing to complain about. Ah no. Those words were written by the Apostle Paul as he sat shackled in chains in a prison in Rome facing the possibility of execution. He clearly did not have too much to rejoice about.

But through that passage, Paul wasn't telling his readers to be “happy always”, but to rejoice *in* the Lord. That's where that passage is confusing for so many people and women like us. We have a tendency to think that to “rejoice in the lord always” means that we're supposed to be happy and giddy in every situation in life.

Your car breaks down and it's going to cost \$1,000 to fix it. Hurrah!

Your grown child decides they don't want to go to church anymore. Praise God, keep it coming!

A good friend was just diagnosed with cancer. Thank you Lord, hallelujah!

But Paul doesn't tell us to rejoice in our circumstances or difficulties, but to rejoice *in the Lord*. It puts the focus on God and not ourselves or our situation. The Lord who loves us beyond measure and can work all things to our good is worthy of our rejoicing. Despite the situations around us, we can always find joy in our Lord. When life is good, God is good. When life is rotten, God is still good, and when life is just downright mediocre, God is so very, very good.



Here's a good way to think about how we are to "rejoice in the Lord always." See, a small child brings you a picture like this. What would you say? You'd probably say, "Oh that's beautiful! Thank you! And you would praise them and love them. But what if they would have brought you a picture like this? You'd also say, "oh that's beautiful, thank you! And you would praise them and love them. You see, our joy is not in circumstances, our praise is for the child—not for the picture.

Now if we take that same thought process to God, our joy and purposes found in what really matters, to the one who really matters, no matter what our "picture" or life looks like. We find our joy and our purpose in him and in what he's done for us—sacrificed his own son who died for our wretched souls that we may have eternal life.

Really? God is the one who should be doing the whining and complaining about us and how we live our lives. But no, he's always there. He always loves us, and he's promised us a life that will exceed any life we feel we'd like on this earth. That's why Paul could rejoice. Paul knew the other side of the picture. He had been an unbeliever who really had a pretty good life. He was intelligent, was at moderate wealth for those days, and came from a strong and faithful Jewish family, but he chose to follow Jesus and all that came with it—the stoning, the persecution, and imprisonments because he knew that following Jesus and living a life for him and the Eternal reward promised through the Savior was far more to rejoice about than the alternative. So even when facing challenges and trials in life, let's ask the Lord to help us rejoice *in him*. It won't make us enjoy our circumstances anymore, it will help us to see past them to the bigger picture that God has painted for our life.

Thank you for joining us on A WORD for Women, and as Paul said, "Rejoice in the Lord always." And, because Paul knew our weak and feeble human thinking might not get it the first time he says, "I will say it again: Rejoice!"

PERMISSIONS POLICY

A WORD for Women is the sole owner of all content on this website. Please read our policy for use of our material.

No Permission Needed

Please feel free to link to this site.

Re-posting is allowed when using partial content of material with a link to this website

Please use our content in non-profit publications such as church newsletters, bulletins, bible studies and bible conferences. It must have this copyright notice: "Used by permission from www.awordforwomen.com".

Permission Needed

You need written consent to:

Use for commercial, for-profit purposes

Alter or change any content

Repost content in its entirety

Dig Deeper

Dig Deeper is a cross-reference section for every devotion. To use this feature, reference the numbers next to the titles starting on the Archive Page of our website: www.awordforwomen.com/archives

Or you can use the search bars in the website.

